

Mary Edith Powel Naval Historical Collection

A Finding Aid to the Papers in the Naval Historical Foundation Collection in the Library of Congress



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Prepared by Ruth S. Nicholson

Collection Summary

Title: Mary Edith Powell Naval Historical Collection

Span Dates: 1747-1922

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1890-1899)

ID No.: MSS52845

Creator: Powell, Mary Edith, 1846-1931

Extent: 32,000 items ; 63 containers ; 21 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Collector of naval history. Correspondence, biographical data on American and foreign naval officers, newspaper and magazine clippings, illustrations, photographs, commissions, autographs, pamphlets, and notes collected by Powel about naval history.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Benjamin, Walter Romeyn, 1854-1943--Correspondence.

Bruckner, M.--Correspondence.

Luce, Stephen Bleecker, 1827-1917--Correspondence.

Powel, Mary Edith, 1846-1931.

Powel, Samuel, 1818-1885--Correspondence.

Powell family--Correspondence.

Organizations

United States. Navy--History.

United States. Navy--Officers.

World's Columbian Exposition (1893 : Chicago, Ill.)

Subjects

Armor.

Exhibitions--Illinois--Chicago.

Marine accidents.

Marine biology.

Merchant marine.

Naval education.

Navies--Officers--Autographs.

Navies--Officers--Correspondence.

Navies--Officers.

Navies.

Ordnance.

Ships.

Sino-Japanese War, 1894-1895.

Spanish-American War, 1898.

Places

Arctic regions--Discovery and exploration.

United States--History, Naval.

Occupations

Collectors.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The naval historical collection of Mary Edith Powel, collector of naval history, was deposited in the Library of Congress by the Naval Historical Foundation in 1963 and converted to a gift in 1998.

Processing History

The collection was processed in 1971. The finding aid was revised in 2011.

Additional Guides

In 1971 the Library published *Dudley Wright Knox, a Register of His Papers in the Library of Congress, and a Register of the Collection of Mary Edith Powel*.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Mary Edith Powel is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The Mary Edith Powel Collection is open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Mary Edith Powel Naval Historical Collection, Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1846, Dec. 13	Born, Philadelphia, Pa.
1913	Published "Election in Newport," <i>Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society</i> (no. 8)
1915	Published "Some of Our Founders," <i>Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society</i> (no. 16)
1928	Published "The Old Easton Farm," <i>Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society</i> (no. 64)
1931, Feb. 15	Died, Newport, R.I.

Scope and Content Note

The Mary Edith Powel (1846-1931) Naval Historical Collection spans the years 1747-1922, but is concentrated in 1890-1899, the period when the collection was formed. Powel collected newspaper and magazine clippings, illustrations, photographs, commissions, autographs, letters, and pamphlets relating to naval matters.

The collection's arrangement is based on Powel's organization of the material, and her headings and captions are used throughout. Biographical data on British and United States naval officers are termed "navy portraits" and form a large part of the collection. In many cases there are also autographs or autograph letters of the officers concerned.

In addition to navy portraits, the collection contains information on ships, the navies of many countries, and naval history. Subjects include disasters at sea, arms and armor, marine natural history, and such topical matters as the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, the war between China and Japan in 1894, and the Spanish-American War.

A small collection of correspondence rounds out the papers, including letters to Powel's father, Samuel Powel, and other members of the Powel family, 1836-1894; letters to Powel from M. Bruckner and Walter Romeyn Benjamin, book and autograph dealers from whom she purchased material for the collection, 1891-1893; letters between Powel and Stephen Beecker Luce; and letters to Powel from various naval officers, their wives, and other friends.

Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is arranged in seven series:

- [General Correspondence, 1836-1922](#)
- [Foreign Navies, 1747-1901](#)
- [U.S. Navy Portraits, 1784-1905](#)
- [U.S. Navy Fleets and Squadrons, 1889-1896](#)
- [U.S. Navy Ships, 1890-1902](#)
- [Miscellany, undated](#)
- [Subject File, 1759-1913](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1	<u>General Correspondence, 1836-1922</u> Chiefly letters received by Mary Edith Powel and other members of the Powel family. Chronologically arranged.
BOX 2-15	<u>Foreign Navies, 1747-1901</u> Autographs, commissions, letters, illustrations, photographs, magazine and newspaper clippings, and printed matter. * Indicates presence of autograph material. Alphabetically arranged.
BOX 16-22	<u>U.S. Navy Portraits, 1784-1905</u> Autographs, commissions, letters, notes, illustrations, photographs, magazine and newspaper clippings, and printed matter. * Indicates presence of autograph material. Alphabetically arranged.
BOX 23-24	<u>U.S. Navy Fleets and Squadrons, 1889-1896</u> Magazine and newspaper clippings, illustrations, and printed matter. No arrangement.
BOX 25-30	<u>U.S. Navy Ships, 1890-1902</u> Notes, magazines and newspaper clippings, illustrations, photographs, and printed matter. Alphabetically arranged.
BOX 31	<u>Miscellany, undated</u> Bibliography, holograph notes, and lists of British and U.S. naval officers. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 32-63	<u>Subject File, 1759-1913</u> Letters, notes, magazine and newspaper clippings, photographs, illustrations, and printed matter. * Indicates presence of autograph material. Alphabetically arranged.

Container List

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Foreign Navies, 1747-1901

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Foreign Navies, 1747-1901

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Foreign Navies, 1747-1901

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U.S. Navy Portraits, 1784-1905

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